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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4865th meeting of the Security Council, held on 20 November 2003, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in the Great Lakes region", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council recalls its Presidential Statement of 24 April 1997 (S/PRST/1997/22) and its other relevant statements and resolutions calling for the holding at an appropriate time of an international conference on peace, security, democracy and development in the Great Lakes region of Africa, with the participation of all Governments of the region of the Great Lakes and Central Africa and all others concerned, to be organized under the aegis of the United Nations and African Union, with a view to achieving a sustainable peace, security and stability for all countries in the region, in particular through the full normalization of their relations and the establishment of confidence building measures and mechanisms.

"The Security Council considers that the holding of the proposed conference will help build on the progress made in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi peace processes to achieve lasting peace and promote the national reconciliation processes in all countries concerned in the region.

"The Security Council welcomes the progress made towards the convening of the proposed conference, expresses satisfaction at the fact that the countries of the region have launched the preparatory process of the conference with the first meeting of their national coordinators, held in June 2003 in Nairobi, and considers it now crucial to follow up this initial step with intensified efforts. It takes note with appreciation of the briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region, Mr. Ibrahima Fall, and welcomes the offer made by the government of Tanzania to host a summit during the year 2004.

"The Security Council encourages the governments concerned, with the support of their civil societies, their neighbours and development partners, to continue their efforts to bring about a successful conference, based on a regional, all-inclusive and action-oriented approach. It stresses the importance of the participation in this conference of all States concerned, in particular those neighbouring the Democratic Republic of the Congo or Burundi, and encourages the States in the region to reach early agreement on participation in the conference.

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"The Security Council emphasizes the relevance to the proposed conference of the Solemn Declaration of the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) adopted by the Organization of African Unity Lome Summit in July 2000, of the Maputo Decision adopted by the Executive Council of the African Union in July 2003 and of the Declaration of Principles on Good-Neighbourly relations and Cooperation adopted by the Governments of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, and Uganda in New York on 25 September 2003, as well as of the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

"The Security Council appeals to the countries of the region and to the international community to provide sustained political and diplomatic support as well as adequate technical and financial assistance so that the conference is well prepared, timely, and that effective follow-up actions are taken. It commends the active partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in all aspects relating to the preparation of the proposed conference, and welcomes the appointment of Mr. Keli Walubita as Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for the Great Lakes region.

"The Security Council calls on the countries of the region and the members of the international community to support the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes region and the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission for the Great Lakes region, and expresses its gratitude to the Secretary-General for keeping it informed of developments in the region and requests him to continue to do so on a regular basis."